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Vom Organismus der Sprache und von der Sprache des Dichters. Zur Systematik der Sprachprobleme. By MARGARETE HAMBURGER. Leipzig, Felix Meiner. 1920. pp. vii, 186.

The author finds such days as these well spent in taking measure of the cultural attainments of one's country. Her own contribution is to be a study of speech, since a people's speech parallels its intellectual development; and her particular concern here is the aesthetic side. But two hundred words give small space in which to do justice to one's mother tongue in all its aesthetic aspects, especially when allowance must be made for the repetition and overlapping of a style which is not succinct and an organization by no means compact. And the author's range is ambitious: theories of the origin of speech, the history of its development, an estimate of it as art and as a medium of art, a formal criticism of poets' language are her main headings; and she touches upon other problems, as the possibilities of translation, the existence of synonyms, the nature of genius. Consequently the theories are not always given the evaluation which makes such summaries most worth while; problems are dismissed with the lining-up of authorities, or with a mere statement of opinion; and generalizations are couched in terms which must lead some readers to hope that they were written more easily than they are grasped.

However, the point of view is clear enough,—and incidental in its exposition are pleasing passages of literary criticism. Speech in its beginnings is more than a vehicle of information: it is always a sign that men are not wholly absorbed in satisfying practical wants. And it is, too, at that level, more than the mere play of imitating nature's sounds. The artistic impulses which make poetry are at work when the speech of a people is formed; the early speech is poetry. In it, and even here and there in its descendant, our own talk of every day, we may expect to find the very stuff which we are accustomed to attribute to the poet's peculiar gift: rhythm and rhyme, and the figures of speech. Metaphor, indeed always takes a large part in the making of a language. It intensifies the impressions of one sense by bringing to them those of another. It names new ideational experiences which have no counterpart in expression. And here it is in the nature of metaphor that it conveys the meanings in imaginal form, and keeps always in the hearer the sense of the image. But its intention never is to illustrate; its fitness consists in the unity of its effect: its various images do not become explicit and discrete, but rather give richly on the side of mood. "Grau, teurer Freund, ist alle Theorie, und grün des Lebens goldner Baum" is the example quoted from a later, individual maker of language.

But speech must grow along with the thought of the race. The demand which German thought in its development made of language was that it became less palpable and more abstract. The music was lost, and the metaphors faded to symbols. There is, of course, gain of a sort, and one which the author does not underrate, for the speech which carries evolved thought: it must become highly organized and variously shaded. But it comes a long way from poetry; and the poet meets a difficulty, which gives other artists little worry, in this medium which has lost so much of its vividness in serving non-artistic ends. In his remolding of it for his use, however, it comes to a new birth; and we are to consider that here the making of speech, which has been the work of the race, passes into the hands of creative individuals. Even the smaller men among them have a share in the achievement, for they help in restoring and putting into circulation the

old sensory meanings of words, and whatever the centuries may have given in the way of emotional accruals. Or in depicting situations for which current German is especially inadequate, the dialects with their rhythms and moods may be adapted. But revival is not sufficient, and at various times, in protest against the flatness of common speech or heavy tradition of literature, new language has been made. Such a spirit, with the need for a new form to match their thought, inspired the *Stürmer und Dränger*.

This is the outline of Hamburger's view. One of the questions to which it brings her, naturally, is the degree to which speech created by the poet may influence, and come into, the speech of the people. Authorities say that the very color of Goethe's language made it less usable by others; words and structure might be paralleled, but the values were his alone. Other authorities say that Goethe gave German new vigor and new dimensions which are more precious than any material enriching through new colors and tones. The author herself brings instances of words which are the gifts of artists and philosophers; and concludes in general terms that, in so far as the poet crosses the limits of his individuality to find his highest development in the whole, there is harmony between his speech and the speech of all.

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Abzählende Methoden und ihre Verwendung in der psychologischen Statistik. By O. LIPMANN. Leipzig, J. A. Barth, 1921. pp. 78.

This monograph, as its title suggests, deals with the statistical treatment of mass-results rather than with the older established psychophysical methods. The view taken is from the standpoint of the individual within a group of performances, or of the group within different performances, or of different groups within the same performance. The treatment is almost wholly graphical or tabular in nature; very little importance attaches to any single representative value except as it serves as basis for the determination of some new curve. The idea of units of measurement is implied in the taking of the data, in the computation of the single values, and in the numerous interpolations; the actual comparisons are between curves or parts of curves. We have the empirically determined curve given as the standard of reference; hence the measure of any performance is a relative and not an absolute matter. Interest, therefore, seems to attach to differences rather than to uniformities; to the results as a whole rather than to an abstracted result; to relative rather than to absolute values.

The methods and practices are those of the natural sciences and of education,—of the biologist, the mental tester, and the worker in the field of experimental education. The psychophysicist will find the monograph interesting inasmuch as it presents a mode of treatment (it treats of psychophysical problems) which differs from that of the regular psychophysical methods; and he may be brought to believe that a relative judgment, after all, is as far as we may safely go in view of the present state of our knowledge about absolute units.

Because of the complexity and the unobservable nature of the conditions which obtain in psychological work, the mode of statistical treatment given to psychology by the natural sciences is inadequate to psychological data; variations and modifications must be made. The author emphasises the importance of these reforms. No less than fifteen varieties of curves are worked out and graphically illustrated, and more than a dozen others are suggested on the analogy of those